2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Steps to promote the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East

Report submitted by Canada

1. At the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Canada supported a resolution calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Canada also voted in favour of the resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". At the United Nations, Canada has called for full adherence and compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by States parties in the region, and has urged the four[1] States in the region that have not signed or ratified comprehensive safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to do so as soon as possible. Canada actively supported the adoption of a resolution on the application of safeguards in the Middle East by the IAEA General Conference in September 2004. Canada has appealed to all States in the region to contribute further to regional stability and security by concluding Additional Protocols to their respective safeguards agreements, thereby demonstrating greater openness and transparency. Canada fully supports efforts by the IAEA to convene, as soon as possible, a forum on the application of safeguards, in which countries from the Middle East and other interested parties could learn from the experience of other regions about comprehensive verification arrangements and other confidence-building measures that could contribute to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

2. Canada shares the serious international concerns about the scope and nature of Iran's nuclear programme. While Canada recognizes that Iran has a right to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, Iran has failed to provide any plausible justification for its efforts to acquire the full nuclear fuel cycle. In a speech to the Conference on Disarmament, delivered on 14 March 2005, Canada's Foreign Minister reaffirmed that Iran's extensive past undeclared nuclear activities, together with its efforts to acquire the full nuclear fuel cycle, have resulted in strong suspicions that Iran has nuclear weapons ambitions. He said that permanent cessation of Iran's uranium enrichment and other proliferation-sensitive activities is

[1] Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Oman (signed on 28 June 2001 but not in force).

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the only acceptable objective guarantee of the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. On 22 February 2005, Canada's Prime Minister said to a summit of NATO leaders that Iran must be encouraged to end its nuclear weapons programme. He expressed Canada's hope that the challenge could be addressed through dialogue and diplomacy, but emphasized that the international community must be prepared to stand behind its words with stronger measures if necessary. Iran's extensive past undeclared nuclear activities, which raise important questions about Iran's commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, were clearly not in conformance with its safeguards obligations, a matter that Canada believes the IAEA should acknowledge and report to the Security Council as required by the Agency's statute. Canada has also encouraged Iran to ratify promptly the Additional Protocol and has actively supported IAEA safeguards activities in Iran.

3. Canada was deeply concerned by the revelation in late 2003 of Libya's nuclear weapon programme and other undeclared nuclear activities. Canada strongly supported the decision of the Libyan Government to end all nuclear weapons-related activities and the efforts of the IAEA to verify that important decision. That resoluteness to disarm in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner, together with Libya's commitment to accept enhanced inspections via the Additional Protocol and to respect fully all its disarmament obligations, were important steps reinforcing regional and international security.

4. When explaining its support for the resolution entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", Canada urged Israel, "in the crucial months leading up to the 2005 Review Conference, to take the necessary first steps to adhering to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon State". This statement is in conformity with the Canadian Government's 1999 disarmament and non-proliferation policy statement, which called upon Israel to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon State, to separate its civilian and military fuel cycles and to place its civilian nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards. It also conforms with Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which calls on all States to promote the universal adoption and full implementation of multilateral treaties whose aim is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.